
Imprimatur,

Aug. 8.
1671.

Rob. Grove R. P. D^m Episc.
Lond. à sac. Dom.

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ἉΓΑΠΑΙ ἈΣΠΙΔΑΙ;

THE

B. T. 11. 27

Norfolk Feast;

A

SERMON,

Preached at *S^t Dunstons* in the *East*, upon
the 18th of *July*, 1671. Being the day
of the Anniversary Feast for that
County, for some years omitted; but
now intended to be continued.

By a Minister of that County.

*Ut non deceat civitatem bene institutam esse sine legibus & Principe:
ita nec convivium oportet, ἀναρχον εἶναι & ἀνοικον. Erasmi.
Si sunt qui in dilectionibus vestris maculati coepulantur semper ipsos ad
luxum, ad ebrietatem immodicè pascentes. Aug. de Fide & opet
Cap. 25.*

L O N D O N,

Printed by J. M. for Nath. Ranew, and Jonath. Robinson,
at the *Kings Arms* in *St. Paul's Church Yard*, 1671.

Gough Norfolk 1. 7



1878

To the Stewards of the *Norfolk*
Feast, and others my Worthy
Friends, and Neighbours of that
County.

Gentlemen,

I *T was no small admiration to me, that
you were pleased (at your renewed Fe-
stival) to nominate me for the Pulpit ;
whose incapacity for that service, might
have caused a jealousie in your invited Guests,
that you had no great skill in chusing a
Cook ; who shewed so little, in the choice of
a Preacher, And I do much more wonder
that your Requests (which have the force of
a command) should call my Notes out of my
Study, where they were laid aside, and by
chance not used as waste Paper. The Title
Page, I hope, may gratifie your desires, which
declares your resolution to a continuance
of your Anniversary Feastival : And if any
shall look farther ; I hope they will account
me a Faithful, though unskilful Steward of*

The Epistle Dedicatory.

the Mysteries of God. *I never was (or I hope, ever shall be) one of those Preachers, who study only to gratifie the curiosity of those Hearers, who most highly applaud the Sermons; in which there appears only the frothy wit of a conceited Preacher; and nothing of the word of God. I love not to court a Text, as some fond Lovers do (with Amorous words) their Silly Mistress; or to shew a Curious Art in carving it into little pieces; and Painting every one of them with fine Flourishes; as if instead of dividing the Word of God aright, and giving to every one his portion; I should cut Sacred, Serious Truths, into Toys, for Children and Fools to play withal. It shall never be my practice to help the Devil catch Sinners, by scratching their itching Ears, till he lay hold on their Immortal Souls. Had I only presented you with Witty Allusions, and Rhetorical Flourishes? it had been to set before you a Dish, finely garnished, and no Meat in it; an ill president at such a time. My business was to commend your Feasting, and to prevent*

The Epistle Dedicatory.

vent those extravagancies (of which I confess, I was more afraid, than hurt) which are the usual concomitants of those Festivals. Your special injunction of a very short Sermon (upon information that the Pulpit was but borrowed for a little while, and must that Forenoon be lent to the Hampshire Preacher, upon the like occasion) must excuse my brevity to the Reader; nor am I to be blam'd, for not enlarging it for the Press; considering my urgent occasions into Norfolk, known to some of you; which makes me fear that the Errata of the Printer, added to those of the Author, will scarcely permit the Reader to guess at what I intended; if he doth, let him afford the same Candour, which I seem'd to have from the Auditors; and it shall not much trouble me, that I did hereby express my self,

July 24.
1671.

Yours ready at command,

W. S.



(1)

THE
NORFOLK FEAST;

A

Sermon Preached at S^t Dunstons in the
East, in London, the 18th day of July,
1671. on the Publick Festival for that
County.

Jude Epistle, Ver. xii. the Former Part.

*These are Spots in your Feasts of Charity: when
they Feast with you, Feeding themselves without
fear, &c.*

THE Holy Scriptures are not
only to be admired, as they
declare to us our own mi-
sery, and a supply through
Gods mercy; but likewise as they give di-
rection to man in every capacity, how to
behave himself; so that his outward con-
cerns may not clash with his inward; whilst
B our



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our Bodies, like *Dives*, fare sumptuously, our Souls may not be like *Lazarus*, wanting *Crumbs*. They are not only a rule of *Faith*, but of *Manners*, and are so fully directive, that there is no opportunity which God puts into our hands, of doing, or receiving good, but we are furnished with instructions and admonitions suitable to the same ; that as the Apostle saith, whether *we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we may do all to the glory of God*, 1 Cor. 10. 31.

I must not build a large Porch to a small House ; make a long Preface, being confined to a short Sermon. Let it be sufficient to tell you, that the greatest part of this little Epistle, is a *Hue and Cry*, which the Apostle sends after some *Robbers of Christianity*, who had crept into, or amongst rather, the household of *Faith* ; or a *discovery*, which the Apostle makes of *Impostors*, who had insinuated into the company of those Christians to whom he wrote ; so that they were not freed from their company,

pany, either in their Religious or Civil Societies ; and (which is worse) they were too ready to give them entertainment, or free admittance ; which makes the Apostle find great fault with the *Christians*, accounting that they were exceedingly *blame worthy*, for that they might avoid their company if they pleased ; and that is the reason that he runs through a great part of the Old Testament, and urgeth instances, which might make them afraid to *stain their Religion* by evil *practices* ; such as they were liable to, if they kept the company of such persons ; much more if they endured the sight of those *unchristian deportments*, whereof they were guilty ; and this they did in their Love-feasts, which the Apostle here blameth ; *These are Spots in your Feasts of Charity*, &c. I need not spend time in the Explication of terms, *σπίλας* ; The word signifieth any spot or blemish, which causeth either *deformity* in the body, or *uncomeliness in the garment*, and so it is commonly used : The same word

Παρά τῷ
 πᾶσι ὅλοι
 ὁ τραβένδο
 κανὺν μα-
 cula est qua vestimento inherens illud deturpet, Zanch.

Σπίλῃς non solum est glareæ; id est, terra species quæ maculas relinquit sed etiam concavum saxum in littore maris seu lavum ac flumina in quam concavitatem, tanquam in commune receptaculum sordes aquarum confluunt, Arist.

In the words observe, 1. A *Commendation* supposed; They kept their Feasts of Charity. 2. A *Discommendation* expressed, There were Spots in their Feasts; From which words I observe two things.

1. *Feasting is lawful*; the Apostle finds no fault with the *Chear*, but only with the *Guests*.

2. *Feasting is dangerous*, for which I have a double ground: 1. From the *Guests* intruding (if not voluntarily entertained) or from their *Department*, when they were Feasting, ἀπίστος *sine metu & timore*: They neither feared Gods displeasure, nor cared for his love.

I begin with the first, *Feasting is lawful*; had I said commendable, the expression in the Text would have born it out, ἀνέγκαιρος

in

in the Feasts of Love; in which you express a love of *complacency*, which you take in the enjoyment of a Christian Society; and by which you take opportunity to shew your love of *Pity* to those that are in want, though absent; both which are Christian Practises, highly commendable.

I intend not here to prove the Assertion by the Instances of those Religious Feasts which *God commanded*; nor shall I need, for there are instances enough concerning civil Feasting, which though not commanded by God, yet are recorded amongst other commendable practices of good men in Holy Writ for our imitation, or at least to secure us, that we shall not offend God, unless it be accidentally; as we may do in our most Religious Services. *Lot Feasted*

the Angels; *Abraham Feasted at the weaning of his Son Isaac*; *Isaac Feasted Abimelech* and others; *David Feasted Abner*. Gen. 19. 3.
& 21. 8.
& 26. 30.
2 Sam. 3. 20.

These were all good Men, who valued the favour of God above all earthly enjoyments, and were as ready to *Fast*, as to *Feast*,

Feast, and as willing to be in houses of *Mourning*, as of *Rejoycing*; yet when there was extraordinary occasion of rejoycing, they did no more omit that, then the other. But why should I mention these instances; our *Saviour himself* was present at several Feasts; nay, the leading Miracle was at one of them; at which he did not turn *Bread* into *Stones* to dis-appoint them; by which unlawfulness might have been supposed; but their water into wine, thereby allowing what they did, and encouraging them in it.

More particularly it appears, that Feasting is lawful.

1. From the bounty of God; from the kindness of whose Providence we furnish our Tables with plenty of meat and drink, whose are the Cattel upon a thousand hills, and who giveth us our meat and our drink in their season.

1. The bounty of God appears in the abundance of the creatures bestowed on us, far more, then what are necessary for
mans

mans subsistence : Some think that half the Creatures might be spared, if God (who made nothing in vain) did not intend man should take delight in the extraordinary use of them : *Deus multo plura condidit, quibus carere possumus quam quibus* *Beza.* *necessario nobis opus est.* There are some of the Creatures might be wholly spared from mans necessity ; they being in their very natures only delightful, and adorning as *Oyl, to make the Face to shine*, and wine to cheer mans *Heart*. What needs the *Silk Worm* spin out its own bowels, working it self to death ; when the Sheep can very well spare its Fleece from its own back, to make man a covering for his : What need a thousand (that is an innumerable company of) Hills be covered with Cattel, ready to be driven down to the Slaughter-house ; when as the Corn and Herbs might preserve the life of man, (as some think) with a more healthful constitution. Many impute the long lives of the Fathers before the Flood, to such a kind of
of

of dyet as one cause of them. Wine is not necessary, and yet God does not only give it for the use of man, but gives it in abundance ; That as *Solomon* saith, the *presses burst forth with new Wine*, Pro. 3. 10. 'Tis very observable, that in the fore-mentioned place (*Jo. 2.*) our Saviour did not only turn the water into wine, but for the quality of it, into that *which was very good*, which they might delight to drink of : So pleasant it was, that the Ruler of the Feast wished he had had it sooner ; and doubtless, feared that there was but little of it ; but he needed not, for besides the delightfulness of it, as to the quality, there was a very great quantity, *five water-pots containing two or three Firkins a piece.* I might mention to you the abundance of that Provision, Lenten fare, which the Sea affords ; enough for ought I know to Feast all the world : I am sure it could not but be a very extravagant expression in *Moses*, and proceeding from his passion, (as meek as he was) when he said, *Shall all the*

the Fish of the Sea be gathered together to Numb. 11.
suffice them, although there were six hun-^{22.}
 dred thousand footmen, who might proba-
 bly be very hungry Travellers.

To conclude this particular, if the great provider affords such plenty, we may well think that he intends an extraordinary entertainment; when the great House-keeper lays in *so much Provision*, we may conclude he intends a Feast.

2. Gods bounty does not only appear in the Creature bestowed, but also in the *manner of giving*, which is *with delight and cheerfulness*; God doth not only afford us his creatures, but bids us *eat and drink abundantly*, how great soever our entertainment be, we are welcome to it: He gives liberally, and upbraideth not μη ἐμνήσθητε not telling us of our sin, of what faults we have been guilty, which would make our meat unpleasant to us: He that did not grudge us the *Blood* of his Son, will not grudge us the *Fruits* of the Earth: He that spared not his own Son,

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but

but delivered him up for us all. *How shall he not with him also freely give us all things*, Rom. 8. 32. *Χαρίσται*, he gives gratis; whatsoever we do cannot pay God for our meat and drink, though we never Feasted; nor does God expect any thing as a satisfaction from us; but whatsoever service and obedience we perform, is requited in another world; we have not only our *Corn*, but our *Money* in our *Sacks*. I am sure good men have little reason to question this, when they consider the bounty of God to those that are *wicked*, because they are his *Creatures*, and so of his *Household*; we are not to imagine that the worst of men *steal their Riches from God*, or that their substance is disposed to them by an *unwilling Providence*, but from the free pleasure of their Creator, who gives them *Portions* in this life, who refuse *the inheritance of the Saints in light*. *The Earth is given into the hand of the wicked*; Job 9. 24. And the expression in the Parable of the rich man, *Luke 16*. tells us, that he had

had a lawful propriety in what he enjoyed ; *Thou in thy life time hadst thy good things* ; God does not only give but liberally and chearfully, *He is kind to the unthankful, and to the evil*, Luke 6. 35.

2. As Feasting appears lawful from the bounty of God, the great Feast hainer ; so likewise from the good that is occasioned by it.

1. It is the occasion of *rejoycing* ; and this is no ways offensive, but acceptable and pleasing unto God, who hath caused all the Creatures to *rejoyce* in the good which they do receive from him. The Beasts of the field, when they are afforded fresh Pasture, or any extraordinary Provision, they do some way or other expreis that they Feast and are *Merry*. The pritty Birds have no sooner filled their Crops, but they sing the several notes which their Creator hath appointed them to tune ; we observe some of them rising from their turff (when filled their bellies but with little stones, or some such contemptible fare)

*Sic prata
viderunt,
Virgil.*

singing merrily, and soaring higher and higher, as if they were going to thank their Maker for a Feast. The Earth, when it brings forth its fruit, expresseth *mirth and jollity*. The Pastures are not seen in a sable hue or mourning habit, but appealed with such gorgeous attire, that *Solomon in all his Glory*, is not to be compared to one of the flowers of it, *Math. 6. 29.*

Lata seges.

The Corn Fields are seen with a merry countenance, when they grow near unto Harvest; the Harvest men may hold their tongues and mind their work. The Fields themselves make their own Acclamations, and sing their own Harvest Songs; *Psal. 65. 13. The little Hills rejoyce on every side, The Vallies are covered over with Corn, they shont for joy, they also sing:* And if the Servants be so merry when they bring in the Provision, how may the Master rejoyce, for whom it is provided. God will have man to rejoyce in every condition; in his Religious capacity as a servant to God: The Apostle commands the *Philippians* to rejoyce.

rejoyce in the Lord always, (and then he calls for a second part to the same tune) *and again I say rejoyce*, Phil 4. 4. When we pray unto God, we must not come like *Malefactors* before a *Judge*, but as *Children* to a *Loving Father*, who delights to give whatsoever is good for them; *Ask in faith*, and *come boldly*, are expressions to cheer the heart of man, in this piece of his Religious Service. In our Meditations it is not pleasing to him, that as sometimes did the *Psalmist*, we should *think of God and be troubled*, but that our *Meditation of him should be sweet*, as they were other while to *David*, who could willingly lye awake to solace himself with the thoughts of him. In *Afflictions* God will not have us *dejected*, but *merry*, accounting his rod as well as his staff a comfort; we may well rejoyce if we are *accounted worthy to suffer*. The adorning of our houses with the richest furniture, should not be so pleasing, as the *spoiling of our Goods* should be rejoycing; no Musick more pleasant in the ears
of

of God, then to hear the *Apostles* (*those birds of Paradise*) *singing in their Cages*: No melody on Earth more pleasant to God, then to hear a Saint *sing in sufferings*, or *glorying in tribulations*, Rom. 5. 3. And if it becomes us to be merry, when there is seeming cause of sorrow; surely it doth not please God that we should be sorrowful, when we have an apparent cause of rejoicing: If we must be merry and joyful when we have nothing but *the bread of Sorrows*, and *water of affliction*, we may, and ought to rejoice, when God gives abundance; we may then *eat our bread with a merry heart*, and *drink our Wine with cheerfulness*, as those in the Book of Ezra, Chap. 6. 22. who kept the Feast with joy, because the *Lord* had made them joyful.

2. Feasting is lawful, in that it is the occasion of *mutual love and Friendship*, which is so acceptable to God, and so beautiful an aspect void of *Spots*, that the Scripture it self knows not how to express the splendour of it; *Behold how good and how pleasant*

tant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. The same word which in the singular number signifyeth *Love*, in the plural signifieth *Feasts*; to let us know that we do not meet to *eat* and drink, but to expresse love one to another; or as if meat and drink were meer intruders, and that Feasting consisted in nothing but the multiplication of Love. The Pen-man of the Book of *Job*, describing his happiness after the large *Inventory* of his goods, gives an account of his comfort in his Children, and that particularly in their mutual love, which was expressed by the brothers *Feasting* in each others house, and calling their sisters to eat and to drink with them: what their meat and drink was, is not set down, nor is there any reason why it should. 'Tis enough to say they *eat and drink together*; and we may suppose that they Feasted with the mutual love and *embraces of brothers and sisters*. When *Isaac* saw *Abimelech*, and the two others coming towards him, his heart began to rise, at the sight of
one

Psa. 133. 1.
 אֵין אֶחָד.

one whom he supposed to have too little love for him; but after some parley, *Isaac* makes them a Feast, which proved a confirmation of the League made between them. Our Feasting is, or should be some resemblance of future happiness; we all meeting to enjoy good from God, and to love one another till we come to *Feast with our elder brother in his and our Fathers kingdom*, where our Souls shall be filled with the Glory of God, as our bellies are now with his good Creatures; where we shall drink with him of that wine of joy, which he promised us: *I will not drink of the fruit of the Vine, till I drink it new with you in my Fathers Kingdom*, Luke 26. 20.

4. Feasting is good, as it gives opportunity for acts of Charity to those that are in misery. I am a stranger to the manner of proceedings in these *Festivals*, having never been either Preacher, hearer, or spectator at of any them: But I was lately informed, that there hath been upon the like occasion, a Collection for the relief of some distressed

sed Countrymen, a practice very commendable, and very antient too; for it was antiently one of the great designs of Christians, in their *Love-Feasts*: Our Saviour observing too great a neglect of this, seems to command that none but the poor should be invited: *When thou makest a Dinner or a Supper, call not thy Friends, neither thy* ^{Luke 14.} *Kinsmen, &c. but call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind*: That which is done to our poor brethren, is done to Christ himself: Better not Feast at all, than that Christ should say, they Feasted, but there was not one Morfel for me, I was Hungry and you fed me not. 'Twas said of the Jews, *Est. 9.* *ver. 22.* that they observed *days wherein they rested from their Enemies, and a month which was turned unto them from sorrow to joy, and from mourning into a good day, in which they made them days of Feasting and Joy, and of sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor.* There was a Feast carried on well, a good occasion which God had given; *they rested from their Enemies*; good deportment; *they rejoiced, and*

a good conclusion, they *sent gifts to the poor*; they were not so merry, as to forget those that were sad; we may drink and forget our own *poverty & misery*, but we must not drink so, as to forget the *miseries of others*. 'Twas no small provocation to God, that the Prophet *Amos* mentioneth, *Chap. 6. ver. 4, 5, 6.* where God saw men lye upon *Beds of Ivory*, and stretch out themselves upon their *Couches*, and eat *Lambs out of the flock*, and *Calves out of the stall*. That chant to the sound of the *Viol*, and invent to themselves instruments of *Musick*. That drink *Wine in bowls*, and anoint themselves with chief *Ointments*, but they are not grieved at the afflictions of *Joseph*; And therefore he resolveth, *ver. 7.* that they shall be the first that go *Captive*: They think of their Brethren last to help them; God will think of them first to punish them. Let me conclude this particular, with that good advice which *Nehemiah* gave, *Chap. 8. ver. 10.* Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is provided. This may suffice for the Explication of the first

first particular, the *lawfulness of Feasting* ; but here it will be requisite, before I pass it, to remove an Objection or two. *Solomon* calls mirth *madness*, and looks upon all the pleasures we take in the world, to be but *vanity* : He shuts the door of the *house of Feasting*, and opens that of *Mourning*. In answer to which, we must understand, that *Solomon* discovering the vanity of the Creature, doth tell us, that it is *madness* for us to be merry in the enjoyment of such a shadow : But so far as Feasting gives us opportunity to bless God, and to enjoy the society of each other, *Solomon* speaks not against it, if he did, we might confute him in his own *Banqueting House* ; where we have him Feasting many days together, (1 *Kings* 8. 65.) And many expressions in the same Book would contradict each other, *Ecc.* 2. ver. 24. *There is nothing better than for a man to eat and drink, and enjoy good in his labour.* But it may rather be objected, that our Saviour in the forementioned place, *Luke* 14. 12, 13. doth strictly forbid the Feasting of *Friends and*

Relations when thou makest a dinner or a supper ; call not thy Friends, neither thy Kinsmen, ner thy rich Neighbours, lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. But when thou makest a Feast call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, &c. In answer to which, by comparing Scripture with Scripture, we shall find, that (not) is not always an absolute negative, but to be understood in a comparative sense ; *Non simpliciter sed secundum quid, I came not to Baptize, but to Preach the Gospel, i. e.* Rather to Preach the Gospel then to Baptize ; we must not think that *Christianity* doth in the least clash with *Humanity* : *Qui putant hic simpliciter damnari convivium partem humanitatis tollunt ab hominibus : hoc magis absurdum esset quàm austerum cognatos à mensa hospitali excludere, & solummodo extraneis dare locum ; sed ita ut pauperes non negligas.* We find our Saviour at several Feasts, where probably there were rich men entertained, in that of *John 2.* where Christ found wine. I cannot think that at the Marriage of a Rulers Daughter, there should

should be none but *poor*, and *lame*, and *blind* to attend the Bride and Bridegroom ; nor is it probable that such would strive for *Superiority* ; and so we should suppose the former advice to be in vain ; so that the assertion remains undeniable, that *Feasting is lawful*. I dar'ſt not inſiſt upon thoſe inferences which might be made, by which the *covetous worldling* might be reprov'd, who is ſo far from Feaſting others, that he ſtarves himſelf. And likewiſe the *Auſtere Lives* of the *Popiſh Votaries*, who deny themſelves the lawful uſe of Gods Creatures, which he hath given on purpoſe to be received with Thankſgiving.

But I ſhall not proceed any farther in this, knowing well that our corrupt natures have more need of a curb of reſtraint, than rains of liberty. I hope, when you were pleaſed to invite me to this ſervice, you did not expect that I ſhould ſtrain the ſenſe of Scripture, to the gratifying of a luxurious appetite ; that I ſhould be a Prophet of *ſmooth things*, and *deceits* ; or that I ſhould invite, or encourage any to your
Feaſt,

Feast, by *Prophecy of Wine*, and *strong drink*, *Mic. 2. 11.* But that I should be your Monitor, a Prophet to warn you from God, for the prevention of those exorbitancies, whereof we are too apt at such a time to be guilty. That you desire to imitate the Religious Customs in former times, *1 Kings 8.* When the Priests took up the Ark before the Congregation, whilst the Feast was preparing ; or that the example of the Wise man might be our president, who first *prayed* with great devotion, like a Pious Priest, before he *Feasted* with great preparations, like a Munificent Prince ; or that I should write after *Nehe-miabs* copy, who devoutly *read the Law of his God, on the day of his Feasting*, *Neh. 8. 18.* Give me leave therefore to speak to the second Observation, *viz. Feasting is dangerous* ; it must not be *without fear* : The company of our Friends and Countrymen, must not cause us to forget that we are in the *presence of God*. This needs not damp our mirth in the least ; the child may be merry in its fathers company ; we may
rejoyce

rejoyce, though it be *with trembling*, Psal. 2. 11. or as the Common-Prayer Translation, *Rejoyce unto him with reverence*: The Courtier is merry in the presence of his Prince; and because he is so, though he forgets not a due reverence: It is not said that ever *Job* was jealous that his Sons had *sinned*, but when they were Feasting. It was at a *Feast* that Christ was *lost*, and at another that he was *betrayed*.

1. Particularly, Feasting is *dangerous*, yea very *offensive*, if it be at an *unseasonable time*, that is, when Gods Judgments are in the Land: The Prophet *Isaiah* speaks of it, as an affront offered to the great and angry God, *Isa. 22. 12.* *In that day did the Lord call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth. And behold joy and gladness, slaying of Oxen, and killing Sheep, eating Flesh, and drinking Wine, &c.* Such an affront, as he resolves, shall not on a sudden be forgotten by him. That Feasting should cost dear indeed, *their iniquity shall not be purged away till they dye.* If there were now *Wars* in the Land, we
should

should not then be filling of our bellies ; but complaining of our *bowels*, not *merry*, but *pained at the heart* ; as the Prophet *Jeremiah* was, because he heard the *sound of the Trumpet, and the Alarm of War*, Jer. 4. 19. If there were a *Famine* in the Land, it were most unchristian and unnatural for us to be *Feasting*, when many thousands are *starving* : to be faring Sumptuously and Deliciously, when many a poor *Lazarus* would be glad to cheat the dog of his crumbs. If a devouring *Plague* were raging, it were a dreadful thing for us to be *slaying Oxen*, when God is *killing men* ; to be carving our fine dishes, when God is tearing in pieces, *and none to deliver* ; to invent Instruments of Musick, when we should be continually thinking, that we hear the *doleful noise of death-bed* groans in every house excepting, (where they are all dead) If this great City were *on Fire*, it were horrid wickedness for us to be *merry* ; when so many, on a sudden, are exposed to the cruelty of such an irresistible enemy : for us to be drinking Wine, vvhhen there vvere more need
that

that our heads should be as waters, and our eyes a fountain of tears to quench such a devouring flame ; or if it lay still in its ruines, it would not then be seemly to be walking (through that which was once a City) in our ranks, to the house of Feasting ; but at the first sight of such an amazing heap, to fall down on our faces, and be covered with ashes, to bear it company. But thanks be to God the case is not so with us, we have here no rumors of Wars, but are Feasting, because *God hath given us rest from our Enemies.* There is no Famine in the Land (unless it be of thankfulness to God for his abounding blessings) There is no *complaining in our streets*, unless it be by some unthankful monsters of an *inopem copia* ; that plenty makes us poor ; we are not sending our Sacks into another Country to fetch Corn ; but could afford great quantities to them that want it ; we are not buyers, but sellers ; we are Feasting in a City, which hath no cause to complain, either of Wars or Famine, but to rejoyce and be thankful that *Peace is within*

her Walls, and plenteousness in her Palates. Nor is there now a raging Plague, but the continuance of health to admiration. The City so replenished, that the streets complain not for want of passers by; we have not now a destroying Angel, but a preserving God. Nor is the City flaming, or in its heap of ruins, but rebuilt to the admiration of all Spectators; yea, more then built, in some sense, if the computation of those fail not, who think that the cost already bestowed, would more then have finished it as it was. How goodly are the new Fabricks! methinks every House calls to the Passenger for admiration, to behold how it stands upright, like a Giant in Armour of Proof, to defend it self against the rage of such an insulting enemy. It is said in the Book of *Ezra*, that at the re-building of the Temple, the *old Priests and Levites* (who had seen the former) *wept*, to see a *narrower foundation* laid, then was before, I may say by the rule of contraries, that had they seen a probability of a more magnificent Structure, they would have shouted as loud

loud for Joy, as they Wept. This is our case, we do not find now that the City is become like a Village, known by a few scattering Cottages ; but the rebuilt habitations seem to condemn those as vile, and inconsiderable, that remain as they were. In which respect, I hope, we are not guilty of *unseasonable Feasting* : I know the Nation is not without great complaints, and many do yet feel the smart of the fore-mention'd judgments ; but God having removed them from us, one day of rejoycing, I hope, will not be offensive ; unless we make it so by those extravagancies, which men are too often guilty of at such a time ; and this brings me to the second.

2. *Feasting is dangerous*, in that we are at such a time *apt to exceed the bounds of Sobriety and moderation* : Gluttony and drunkenness are the usual concomitants of Feasting ; These are *spots* indeed, great *blemishes*, for they make men look like Beasts ; the same word, which signifies *spots*, signifies, (as before I observ'd) *Rocks in the Sea*, because they are the receptacle of that *mire*

and *dirt*, which a troubled Sea casts up ; but to the glutton and drunkard, they may be called *Rocks* in another sense, in that they *split their souls and bodies* against them.

1. *Gluttony*, a most unbecoming and beastly vice, when men meet together for nothing but to eat ; I should not have said to *eat*, but to *devour* : if the end of Feasting, be Christian Society, such as these may well be spared, as very unpleasant, and unfavorable company, who are like those in *Tertullian*, *Tribus ructantibus accessit aer*, They crowd so great a quantity of the good creatures into their devouring paunches, that the filthy belchings of their foul stomachs annoys the Air, in which more temperate men are only fit to breath. These persons, may be, would thank God for their Feast, but that they have eaten till they have forgotten him ; or rather, they have chosen another God, and that their Bellies ; however unfit they are for God, I am sure they are fit for the Devil, and the service of their Lusts ; like those in the Propheſie of *Jeremiah*, Chap. 5. ver. 7. for whom God
made

made a Feast ; *I fed them to the full* ; and observe what a Metamorphosis the gluttony of the guests made, they sat down *men*, and they rose up *horses*, v. 8. *they were fed horses, everyone neighed after his neighbors wife*. The truth is, the excess of meat and drink gives too much opportunity to men to gluttonize. There is a strange difference between the Feasting now, and what was in old time : Feasting was formerly called only the *eating of bread* : When *Lot* Feasted the Angels, he gave them unleavened bread, or some say, *Placentas*, Cakes made a little finer, and more pleasant then ordinary ; such enter-^{Pisc.}tainment might be thought very mean, for those that came to preserve him and his family ; but there was no fault found with it.

In the 2 *Sam* 6. 19. It is reckoned amongst the magnificent acts of *David*, that he *feasted the people*, and what was their entertainment ; a *Cake of bread*, a *good piece of flesh*, and a *Flagon of Wine* : *Josephus* saith, he gave to every one a morsel of roasted meat,^{Jos. Ant.} and a *Cake fried in the pan* : It was nothing in comparison of our Feasting ; and yet we find

find not but that the people departed very well satisfyed ; less meat, and drink, and more thankfulness to God, and love amongst men, would be the best Feasting.

2. *Drunkenness* is another, and a more abominable vice than the former, in that it more readily deprives man both of his *God*, his *brethren*, and *himself* ; and yet some, *Nabal* like, cannot be merry, unless they be drunken : Feasting and drunkenness were together ; and *drunkenness* given as a reason of his mirth : He held a Feast in his house, like the Feast of a King ; and *Nabals heart was merry within him, for he was very drunken*, 1 Sam. 25. 36. And when he had done Feasting, and being drunken, God took away, not the *cloath*, but the *man* : *Nabal that Feasts like a Prince*, and was *drunk as a Beggar*.

This is the Emperour to which great men give place, and it strangely *tyranizeth* over them, insomuch, that if I did not know my duty better, (considering what an offence it is to the great God) I would ask you whether I might be so bold as to speak against
it :

it : 'Tis a vice accompanied with so much *impudency*, that there is nothing is the occasion of more mirth, or renders a Preacher so ridiculous, as that he should tell a *Christian* it is not fit he should be a *Beast*.

'Tis a vice strangely *Epidemical*, and so interwoven with the common concerns of men ; as if the trade of the Nation could not be carried on without it ; no agreement made, but the parties must *drink*, and oftentimes in such *excess*, as if to be drunk were part of the bargain : Or as if there were some Statute in the Nation, that no bargain should be good in Law, unless the Devil were a witness to it. However men please and delight themselves in this vice, I am sure the consequences of it are very sad. As to God, his holy name (who furnisheth our Tables) is rent, and torn by blasphemous oaths and cursings ; they are worse to him, than the *Angel* was to the *Devil* (*ver. 9.* of this Epistle) who would not give ill words, *railing accusations*. And as to men I may say (respecting general concerns) it is the *destruction of whole Families*. That Country

to

to which we belong, doth too apparently prove the truth of this; a Country which hath been a long time adorned with a *crowd of antient Gentry*; persons of *rare parts* and accomplishments; that are able to give a reason almost for any thing, but their extravagancies, by which some of them have turned their *bags* into *bottles*; their *money* into *wine*; and I am sure that's the way (contrary to our Saviours miracle) to turn their wine into water. What a sad condition doth this vice leave them in, their friend that honoured them, may make the Prophets Lamentation, *they that did feed delicately are desolate, and they that were cloathed in Scarlet, lye upon the Dunghill*; If the vice destroys the body of that person, as well as his estate (which too often happens) what a solitary Widow is there left? one whose Birth, Education, and Fortunes, little thought of such a Devil in the world as Drunkenness, that hath robb'd her, and her Children, not only of a *plentiful estate*, but a *necessary subsistence*: She may now sit solitarily in her closet, and fill those bottles with

with Tears, which her Husband (tumbled into his Grave by Drunkenness) lately emptied of Wine. What becomes of the poor Children? they that were called *Masters* as soon as they were born, must make hast, and learn to be Servants till they dye; or else they may want *Bread*; or have very little to eat, because their Father had so much to *drink*. And this is the *commendable vice* that must not be found fault with; if we consider likewise the ill consequence of it in the time of Feasting; what an *uproar* it makes amongst sober persons; it doth no sooner prevail, but is a *disturbance*, as if the house were on fire. In the midst of *innocent mirth*, the Devil commands his Trumpeter to sound a challenge, *Bacchus ad arma vocat*, (and unless some more sober person can tame the beast, and perswade him to be more civil to others, than he is to himself) instead of meeting like Brethren, Country-men, and Christians; with unfolded arms to embrace each other; we had need, like the *Saxons*, meet in our Armour; instead of

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being

being *merry* and *cheerful* in the house of Feasting, we must be like *Paul* at *Ephesus*, *fighting with Beasts*. The *Love-Feasts* were usually observed by Christians, as a *Preparatory* to the Blessed Sacrament, some say in imitation of Heathens, who used to Feast before their Sacrifices; others because Christ instituted it after Supper: However, if the vice of gluttony or drunkenness prevail; what a sad Christian Love-Feast is that, which is so far from preparing us for the Lords Table, that it hath made our own to become a Table of Devils?

3. *Feasting is dangerous*, as it too much occasions us to forget our *Duties to God*; *Moses* seemed to be more afraid of this, than ever he was of any thing, *Deut. 8. 10. 11.* When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God, and ver. 11. Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God: 'Tis a strange thing that empty bellies should know how to beg; and full bellies should not know how to thank; That scarcity should make them lye

lye *howling upon their beds for Corn* ; and when they have eaten, and are full, that plenty should not make them rise up to return thanks. In the Propheſie of *Jere-miah*, c. 5. v. 7. 8. God was never more abuſed, than when he leaſt deſerved it ; had he pulled the meat out of their mouths, they could not have been more baſe, than when he fed them to the full : They then committed *Adultery*, which ſo provoked God, that he ſeems to be at a loſs for a puniſhment ſutable to their wickedneſs ; *Shall I not viſit for theſe things ?* Questions in Scripture, are always of extraordinary importance : This may be conſidered, either as an appeal to mans judgment ; who can blame my *wrath* if it breaks forth againſt thoſe that abuſe my *love* ? or elſe it denotes *Great diſpleaſure* ; *Shall I not viſit* ; whatever offence I leave unpuniſhed, this *ingratitude* ſhall not eſcape my indignation. And thus I have done with the Second Particular, the *Danger of Feaſting* : I hope you will conſider what I have ſaid, that the firſt may make us *merry in the*

the house of Feasting ; and the second may keep us from Spots, in this our Feast of Charity.

ERRATA.

PAge 4. in the Margin, read ὅλιν, and for *Arist.* r. *Aret.* p. 4. line 15. r. ἀφάβας. p. 9. l. 18. r. ἐνεδίκευτο. p. 12. l. 6. for *appealed* r. *apparrelled*, p. 15. for *drink*, r. *drank*, p. 30. read. viz. *Nabal that Feasted*, &c. p. 28. r. *accessit*.

FINIS.